It is a pleasure to welcome the fall class of 2021 and graduates from virtual commencements in 2020 and 2021. During this time of national challenge it is important to pause and honor you. I am pleased you joined us today to celebrate and reflect on your accomplishments at Ferris State University.

As graduates, you represent the collective hopes and dreams of our institution. In your educational journey you have overcome obstacles and challenges, experiencing both the highs and lows that are a part of earning a college degree. Through your hard work, sacrifice and dedication, you have made it to this significant milestone, where one journey ends, and another awaits you.

At a time like this you need to know that your success is built upon the collective efforts of so many people who care about you and who take great pride in your growth and development. I want to pause for a moment so we can express our thanks to them and they can share their congratulations with you.

We begin with our faculty, who have served as your teachers, advisors, guides, and mentors. We are truly fortunate to have a faculty who are dedicated to teaching and who care deeply about students. I also want to thank our staff, who each contribute in their way for you, our students.

It is important we recognize your family members, beginning with your parents. They have planned and sacrificed to help you reach this pinnacle of achievement.

For many graduates there are proud grandparents. Thank you for your support.

For some graduates there are spouses or significant others who have stood by them in both good and tough times and have supported you working toward this day.

Graduates, some of you also have children, who have had to share their Mom or Dad with books, studying, and homework assignments.

Finally we have many friends and other relatives who have supported us and celebrate with us today.

As you celebrate your graduation today, take a few moments to reflect upon your education and all you have accomplished – and thank those who have supported you throughout your time here at Ferris. Their sacrifice and love have helped create this very special and important moment for you.

On behalf of a grateful university I want to express our sincere congratulations to you. Please know that each of us at Ferris State University is proud of you on this special day.